

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-05

L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 COME-00 EB-04 LAB-01 SIL-01 SAM-01 SAJ-01

NIC-01 /074 W

----- 060520

R 1100700Z NOV 74

FM AMEMBASSY MADRID

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 404

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

AMEMBASSY VIENNA

USEC BRUSSELS 937

USMISSION GENEVA

USCINCEUR

C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 7024

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ELAB, SP

SUBJ: STRIKE AND LABOR SCENE

REF: A. MADRID 6361

B. MADRID 6555

C. MADRID 6833

D. MADRID 6822

BEGIN SUMMARY; STRIKES, LABOR UNREST, AND LABOR AGITATION,
CONTINUE TO BE PROMINENT FEATURE IN VARIOUS PARTS OF SPAIN,
PARTICULARLY IN PRINCIPAL INDUSTRIAL AREAS. CURRENT STRIKES
INCLUDE ONE AT CASA (WHERE USAF F-4 PHANTOMS ARE REPAIRED)
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AND ANOTHER AT SEAT. ACTIVITY OF INTERNATIONAL METAL-
WORKERS FEDERATION (IMF) HAS ALSO INCREASED AND IMF SECGEN
HERMAN REBHAN RECENTLY VISITED MADRID. END SUMMARY.

1. PERHAPS MOST SIGNIFICANT STRIKE THIS WEEK HAS BEEN AT
CASA AIRCRAFT FACTORY IN GETAFE, JUST OUTSIDE MADRID.
STRIKING WORKERS AT CASA, WHICH HAS BEEN PLAGUED WITH
LABOR AGITATION AND INTERMITTENT WORK STOPPAGES FOR
SEVERAL WEEKS IN CONNECTION WITH RENEWAL OF COLLECTIVE
BARGAINING CONTRACT, WERE FORCIBLY EVICTED FROM FACTORY
BY POLICE ON BOTH NOV 4 AND 5 WHILE THEY WERE STAGING
SIT-DOWN STRIKES. FOLLOWING THESE INCIDENTS, COMPANY
MANAGEMENT SHUT DOWN FACTORY ON NOV 6 THUS LOCKING OUT
THE PLANT'S WORK FORCE. THIS WAS FOLLOWED ON NOV 7 BY
FIRING OF ENTIRE 3,000 MEMBER WORK FORCE FOR HAVING
ENGAGED IN LABOR AGITATION. THIS MASS FIRING NOW ENABLES
THE MANAGEMENT OF THE FIRM TO HIRE BACK MOST OF THE
WORKERS UNDER COMPLETELY NEW LABOR CONTRACTS BUT TO REFUSE
TO REHIRE RINGLEADERS OF THE STRIKE. THIS STRIKE HAS BEEN
OF MORE THAN USUAL CONCERN TO THE SPANISH GOVT, INASMUCH
AS IT IS AT PRINCIPAL AIRCRAFT CONSTRUCTION AND REPAIR
FACILITY FOR MILITARY AIRCRAFT WHICH IS OPERATED BY A
COMPANY TWO-THIRDS OWNED BY GOS. IN ADDITION, THE U.S.
HAS A DIRECT INTEREST IN PRODUCTION AT THIS FACTORY BECAUSE
IT IS A PRINCIPAL OVERHAUL/MAINTENANCE (IRAN) FACILITY FOR
USAF EUROPEAN-BASED F-4 PHANTOMS. DESPITE WORRIES ABOUT
POSSIBLE DAMAGE OF DANGER TO U.S. AIRCRAFT CURRENTLY BEING
OVERHAULED, REPORTEDLY NONE HAS BEEN DAMAGED TO DATE, AND
INCREASED SECURITY MEASURES ARE IN FORCE. SITUATION
TODAY IS THAT THE CASA FACTORY REMAINS CLOSED. SIMILAR
SOLIDARITY STRIKES HAVE BEEN OCCURRING AT ANOTHER CASA
INSTALLATION IN SEVILLE.

3. BARCELONA AREA CONTINUES TO BE ANOTHER FOCUS OF
CONTINUING STRIKE ACTIVITY. PRINCIPAL BARCELONA STRIKE
ACTIVITY CURRENTLY CENTERED ON SEAT AUTOMOBILE PLANT
WITH ITS 20,000 WORKERS, ONE OF LARGEST FACTORIES IN
COUNTRY, WHICH IS ALSO NEGOTIATING NEW COLLECTIVE
BARGAINING CONTRACT. PLANT HAS BEEN AFFECTED RECENTLY
BY INTERMITTENT STRIKES OF SHORT DURATION IN DIFFERENT
SECTIONS OF PLANT. ON DIFFERENT DAYS THIS WEEK GROUPS
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OF BETWEEN 3,000 AND 6,000 WORKERS HAVE PARTICIPATED IN
WHAT HAVE USUALLY BEEN SHORT SIT-DOWN STRIKES. TO DATE,
HOWEVER, POLICE AND SECURITY FORCES HAVE NOT BEEN CALLED
INTO PLANT AND INTERRUPTIONS TO PRODUCTION HAVE BEEN
SPORADIC AND BRIEF. A MORE SERIOUS PROBLEM AT SEAT IS
DIFFICULTY BEING FACED BY SPANISH AUTOMOBILE MANUFACTURING
SECTOR. PART OF WORLDWIDE ECONOMIC DIFFICULTIES. IN THIS

CONNECTION SEAT MANAGEMENT HAS JUST ANNOUNCED THAT DUE TO DROP IN SALES AND FACT THAT INVENTORY OF UNSOLD CARS IN STOCK HAS REACHED MAXIMUM THEY CAN ACCOMMODATE, SEAT WILL BE FORCED TO REDUCE ITS SCHEDULED WORK DAYS BY 39 BETWEEN NOW AND APRIL 1975, A WEEKLY REDUCTION OF TWO DAYS OF CURRENT SIX DAY WORK WEEK. WHILE SEAT WORKERS WILL BE ABLE TO COLLECT MOST OF LOST WAS FROM SPANISH SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM, THIS MOVE MAY CAUSE SEAT FURTHER LABOR DIFFICULTIES.

4. LABOR DIFFICULTIES OF PAST TWO MONTHS AT RENAULT AUTOMOBILE PLANT IN VALLADOLID (WITH ITS 13,000 WORKERS), WHICH HAD QUIETED DOWN, TOOK NEW TURN ON MORNING OF OCT 30 WHEN A SERIOUS FIRE BROKE OUT, CAUSING THE DEATH OF 10 WORKERS TRAPPED INSIDE BY FAST-SPREADING FIRE, INJURED AN ADDITIONAL 31, AND DAMAGED NEARLY 50 PERCENT OF RENAULT'S PRODUCTION FACILITIES. RENAULT PLANT WAS THEN CLOSED DOWN AND HAS DURING THE LAST FEW DAYS BEEN GRADUALLY REOPENING SOME OF ITS FACILITIES. SUSPICIONS ARE THAT FIRE MAY HAVE BEEN AN UNPROVOKED INDUSTRIAL SABOTAGE, ALTHOUGH UNCERTAIN BY WHOM. SIMILAR MYSTERIOUS FIRE A MONTH EARLIER AT THE AUTHI AUTOMOBILE PLANT IN PAMPLONA CAUSED CLOSING OF THAT FACTORY, WHICH HAS ALSO ONLY BEEN PARTIALLY REOPENED.

5. SITUATION IN BILBAO AREA ALSO CONTINUES TO BE VERY CONFLICTIVE, ALTHOUGH IT ALSO APPEARS TO HAVE QUIETED DOWN SOMEWHAT THIS WEEK. SEVERAL MAJOR COMPANIES SUCH AS BABCOCK AND WILCOX, GENERAL ELECTRIC, ASTILLEROS ESPANOLAS SHIPYARDS, AND WESTINGHOUSE HAVE HAD STRIKES AND LABOR DIFFICULTIES OF VARYING DEGREES OF SERIOUSNESS DURING RECENT WEEKS. LABOR DIFFICULTIES IN BILBAO AREA HAVE ERUPTED OCCASSIONALLY INTO VIOLENCE, SUCH AS AT END OF OCTOBER WHEN CONTRONTATION BETWEEN SEVERAL HUNDRED WORKERS AND POLICE TOOK PLACE ON CONFIDENTIAL

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STREETS OF BARACALDO INDUSTRIAL AREA IN BILBAO.

6. ONE SIGNIFICANT ASPECT OF THIS FALL'S STRIKES AND LABOR AGITATION IS INCREASING ROLE BEING PLAYED BY INTERNATIONAL METALWORKERS FEDERATION (IMF), PRINCIPALLY THROUGH ITS TWO TRADE UNION AFFILIATES IN SPAIN, I.E., CATHOLIC-INSPIRED USO AND SOCIALIST UGT. CONSULATE BILBAO HAS REPORTED (REF C) THAT AMERICAN EXECUTIVES OF FIRMS HAVE RECEIVED TELEGRAMS CONTAINING THREATS OF OMF ACTIONS AGAINST PARENT COMPANIES UNLESS THEY ACCEDED TO THEIR SPANISH WORKERS' DEMANDS, ADDITIONALLY, EMBASSY LABATT HAS LEARNED THAT IMF SEC GEN HERMAN REBHAN ACCOMPANIED BY IMF ASSISTANT SEC GEN DANIEL BENEDICT VISITED SPAIN ABOUT TWO WEEKS AGO, AND HELD TALKS WITH USO AND UGT OFFICIALS IN MADRID.

REBHAN AND BENEDICT ALSO PROMISED SUPPORT FOR THESE CLANDESTINE FREE TRADE UNION GROUPS, WHICH ARE CURRENTLY INVOLVED IN SEVERAL OF CURRENT LABOR DISPUTES INSIDE SPAIN, THROUGH IMF PRESSURES AGAINST FOREIGN PARENT COMPANIES IN EUROPE, E.G. IN CASE OF ROBERT BOSCH FACTORY STRIKE IN MADRID (BOSCH IS OWNED BY GERMAN PARENT COMPANY) AND IN VALLADOLID RENAULT DISPUTE.

7. ABOVE ACTIVITY BY IMF MAY PRESSAGE RENEWED AND INCREASED INTEREST BY FREE TRADE UNION GROUPS IN SPAIN AND PERHAPS A RENEWAL OF THEIR DETERMINATION TO HELP THEIR SPANISH AFFILIATES COMBAT INFLUENCE OF COMMUNIST-DOMINATED WORKERS COMMISSIONS THROUGH MEANS OF EFFECTIVE INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY ACTIONS. EVEN ICFTU, WHICH HERETOFORE HAS BEEN SOMEWHAT LACKLUSTER IN ITS SUPPORT FOR ITS SPANISH AFFILIATES, SUCH AS SOCIALIST UGT AND BASQUE MODERATE STV, MANIFESTED ITS INTEREST IN SPAIN BY SENDING ICFTU SEC GEN OTTO KERSTEN TO MADRID ON OCT 28 TO ATTEND TRIAL--LATER POSTPONED--OF FIVE UGT SOCIALIST LEADERS (REF D.) KERSTEN MET WITH SEVERAL SPANISH FREE TRADE UNION LEADERS OF UGT AND USO.

8. GOVT ACTIVITY IN STRIKE AND SYNDICAL FIELD CONTINUES TO REFLECT DEMORALIZATION AT SPANISH SYNDICAL ORGANIZATION (SSO) AND PREOCCUPATION OF SSO WITH GENERAL POLITICAL SITUATION RATHER THAN WITH TRADE UNION PROBLEMS. ADDITIONALLY IT IS POSSIBLE THAT SPANISH PRESS, WHICH CONFIDENTIAL

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DURING PAST NINE MONTHS HAS ENJOYED FREEDOM TO REPORT ON STRIKES AND LABOR ACTIVITY, MAY RETURN TO PREVIOUS SITUATION IN WHICH PRINTING OF NEWS ON STRIKES AND LABOR DISPUTES WAS FROWNED UPON IN WAKE OF ENFORCED RESIGNATION LAST WEEK LIBERAL INFORMATION MINISTER PIO CABANILLAS.
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